



Our solar system consists of our star, the Sun, and everything bound to it by gravity ??? the planets Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune; dwarf planets such as Pluto; dozens of moons; and millions of asteroids, comets, and meteoroids.



This distant realm is populated with thousands of miniature icy worlds which formed early in the history of our solar system about 4.5 billion years ago. These icy, rocky bodies are called Kuiper Belt objects, transneptunian objects, or plutoids.



Astronomical units also make it easy to think about distances between solar system objects. They make it easy to see that Jupiter orbits five times farther from the Sun than Earth, and that Saturn is twice as far from the Sun as Jupiter.